

Are There Gender Differences In Social Inclusion of Youth with Autism and Intellectual Disability?

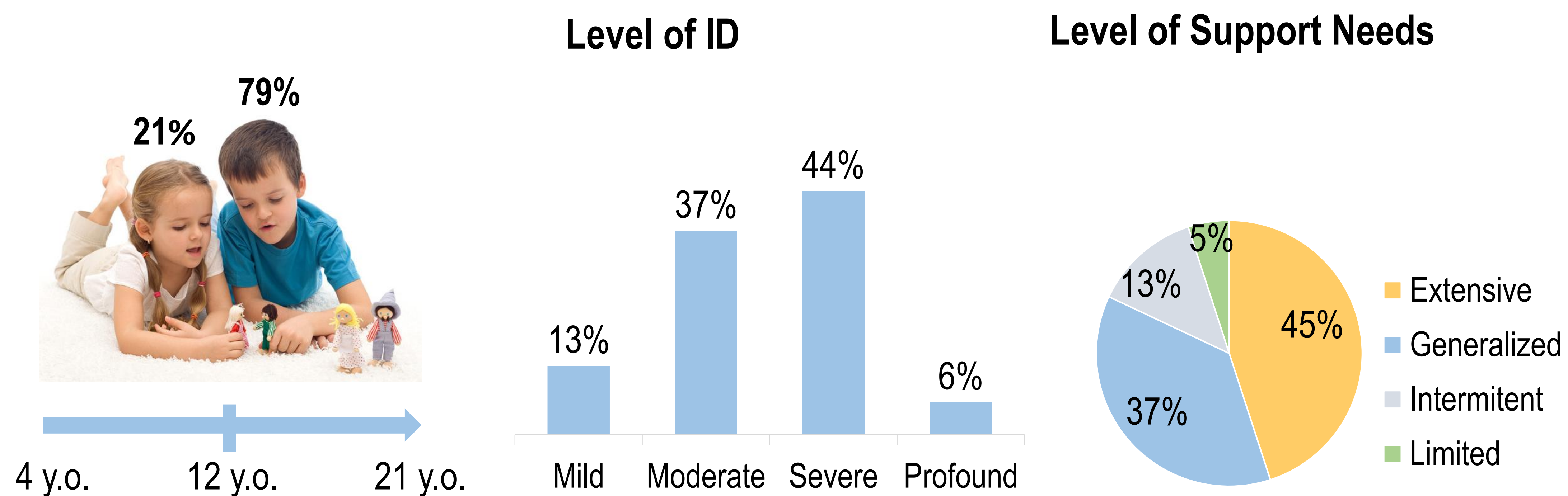
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Recently, lower social inclusion scores have been found in girls with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) compared to their male counterparts. The aim of this poster is to go beyond these gender differences in social inclusion of children and youth with ASD and Intellectual Disability (ID), controlling the effect of level of supports needs, intellectual disability and age, and checking differential item functioning.

420 participants with ASD



Social Inclusion Subscale

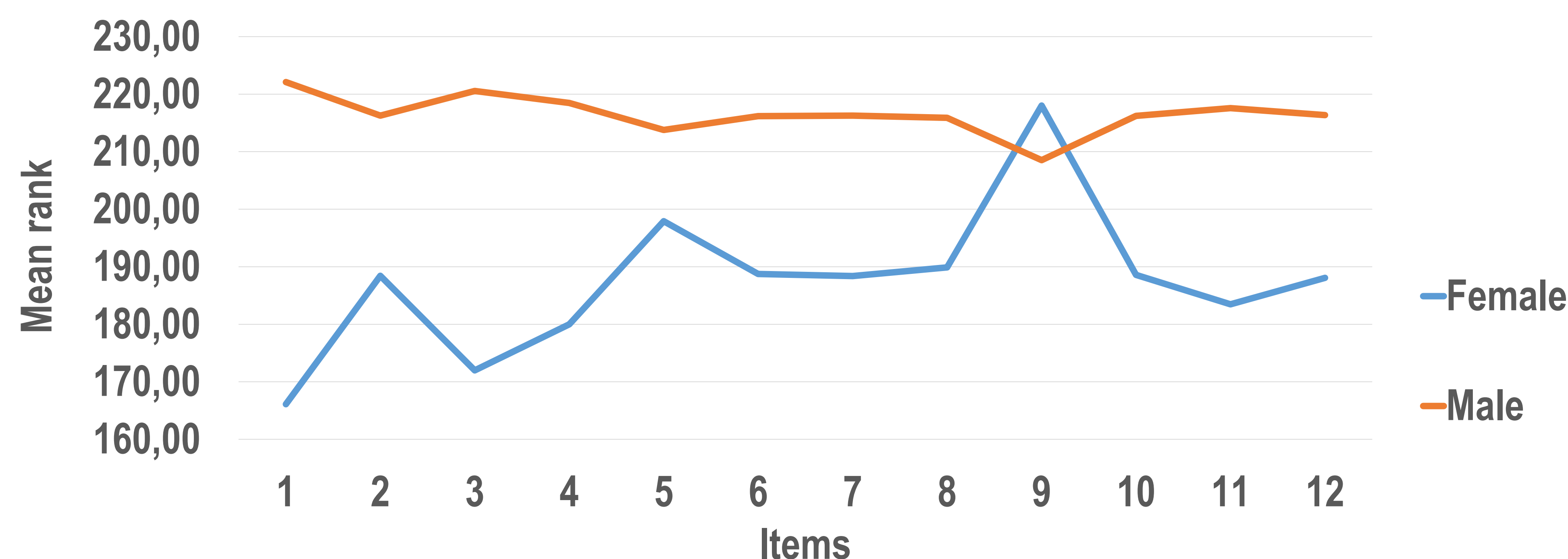
1. He/she enjoys holidays in inclusive environments
2. He/she is integrated with his/her class peers
3. He/she carries out leisure activities with same age peers
4. He/she has opportunities to go to other environments, different from the place where he/she lives
5. He/she participates in activities in his/her community with persons outside his/her support group
6. He/she participates in inclusive activities that are commensurate with his/her abilities
7. He/she participates in inclusive activities that are in line with his/her interests
8. He/she participates in social activities outside the place where he/she receives supports
9. Specific measures are taken to strengthen his/her participation in the community
10. Persons outside his/her support group interact with him/her
11. He/she participates in leisure and cultural activities in community environments
12. He/she participates in natural groups from his/her community



ASD KidsLife Scale
4 frequency options

Results

1st Females showed lower results in almost all the items of social inclusion



2nd After controlling for level of ID, support needs and age, statistically significant gender differences remained on social inclusion.

Variable	df	F	Sig.	Partial Eta squared
Gender	1	5.111	.024	.012
ID level	1	3.504	.062	.008
Support needs	1	13.852	<.001	.032
Age	1	12.017	.001	.028
Error	415			

3rd None of the items showed differential item functioning as a function of gender (i.e. χ^2 test was not significant at .001 level or $\Delta R^2 < .035$)

Discussion

In this study girls with ASD enjoyed lower social inclusion compared to boys. This highlights the need to adopt a gender perspective in the design, application and assessment of person-centered practices and supports aimed at promoting social inclusion of youth with ASD.

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